



Sharpen Your Intellect With Your Problems

Maulana Wahiduddin Khan

Every individual wants peace of mind. But it is hard to find a person who can say that he has attained such a state of mental equilibrium as will allow him to live a life of tranquility. Peace of mind is a distant dream for all of us. What is the reason for this? The reason is that people hanker after ideal peace, that is, pure peace – a peace that is free from all kinds of non-peace items.

But this kind of absolute peace is not in nature's storehouse. Let us take the analogy of the rose. A rose is a very beautiful flower, but every stem has its thorns. Indeed, thorns are an integral part of the rose plant. A poet has rightly said that thorns serve as security guards for the flower. The translation of his Urdu lines is: 'The safety of the flower would become impossible if the thorns were silk-like.' So flowers have to be accompanied by thorns. There must be hard

thorns along with soft flowers – that is, there must be non-peace items along with peaceful items. A peaceful mind is a very precious aspect of human nature and it too needs safety to maintain its sublime quality.

Studies in psychology show that an untroubled mind very soon becomes stagnant. It loses its creativity. For this reason, nature always leads people into challenging situations. It is a non-peace item which acts as a challenge for the mind. This guarantees that the creativity of a peaceful mind never comes to an end. A creative mind is always alive.

It is a common phenomenon that one who is born in affluence and has a problem-free life, very soon finds his mind becoming dull, while the one who is born into a life of problems and hardship, has an active mind. Such a person develops creative thinking and his intellectual development

continues unhindered.

Here, I would like to cite a personal experience, concerning a politician who had two sons. He loved one of his sons very much. He got this son married to someone of his choice and presented him with a farmhouse in which to live a life of comfort, just as he pleased. I met this son and conversed with him. It seemed as if I were talking to a dull person. He did tell some jokes but could not utter a word of wisdom. I have met the other son also. He was not given a comfortable life by his father and so left town for another place. After a few years of struggle, he emerged as a successful person. When I met him, I found that his whole conversation was full of wisdom.

The human mind needs constant challenges. In the environment of challenge, it continues to grow till it becomes a super-mind. On the other

hand, in an environment where there is no challenge, the human mind becomes like a stunted plant and gradually, it shrivels away into a state of underdevelopment.

Peace is not a ready-made item. It is a self-managed item. One should be intelligent enough to develop one's mind along positive lines so that one may deal effectively with unwanted situations. A peaceful mind is only the other name of a positive mind.

British author Samuel Smiles said: 'It is not ease, but effort, not facility but difficulty that makes a man.' It is a fact that ease and facility are constant obstacles to intellectual development, while effort and difficulties are like stepping stones to the sharpening of the intellect.

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